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Counting

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Counting

Raymond Ziemer

They trundle Mom out
 In the big wheel chair.
 She slumps
 One hand cradled useless
 In her lap like a small dead pet,
 The other hand
 Curled in a loose fist
 Finger indicating –
 What?
 We do not know.
 She counts
 In her hollow intonation:
 “Two, three, four...”
 Her pale blue eyes regard us
 Without emotion.
 Parched lips crack
 To count:
 “Three, four, five...”
 And we wonder
 What?
 Stirred from her waking dream,
 She croaks
 “Four, five, six...”
 Counting.
 Until the day
 Just once
 She rouses from her reverie
 With a gasp and
 “Oh,” she cries
 In the gleeful voice of a child,
 “Look at all the puppies!”